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THE HIGH SCHOOL JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

With this issue the HIGH SCHOOL JOURNAL begins its fifth volume, and, as was announced in December, it enters also upon a new policy; namely, that of issuing from time to time special numbers, each dealing primarily with one subject of the curriculum or with a particular phase of educational administration or school procedure.

Three other special numbers have been projected for the current school year. These will be devoted to "Higher Education," "Buildings and Equipment," and "Professional Training." They are to appear in March, April, and May, respectively.

To the special committee and officials of the North Carolina Council of English Teachers, and to several members of the English staff in the University, the editors of the JOURNAL are indebted for the articles that make up the greater part of this issue. Grateful acknowledgement is hereby tendered them for the services they have so willingly performed. Our hope is that this number may prove to be both interesting and helpful to high school teachers generally and to teachers of English particularly.

In our February number it is our purpose to present, in addition to many other things, a review of the educational legislation enacted by the recent extraordinary session of the General Assembly of North Carolina, a statement of the main issue that precipitated the battle royal that was waged, and an appreciation of the superb work by Superintendent Brooks and Governor Morrison in leading to victory the forces that stood for the educational progress of North Carolina.

Do you know of a friend to whom you would like to have us send a sample copy of THE HIGH SCHOOL JOURNAL? We shall be glad to send a sample copy if you request it. Drop us a card giving name and address of anyone you think might be interested in receiving a copy.

The Two-Fold Purpose

IN the earlier years, the high school course in English ought to minister to the child's craving for adventure. Reading is a magic glass, such as the enchanter Merlin used in order to see things far distant or to look into the dim past or the visionary future. It is a means by which we may live more lives than one. It multiplies experience, so that in an instant, as on a magic carpet, he who gives himself to the enchantment is transported through many leagues, to meet heroes of far-off days, to sail the seas with Ulysses or to joust with Arthur's knights, or to hear the ivory horn of Roland. This delight, natural to the child, may become such a part of his being that when he is old he will not depart from it. Young or old, the true lover of books knows the joy of breathlessly following adventure on sea or land until consciousness of the room in which he is sitting, of people by whom he is surrounded, and of all the circumstance of daily life, is lost in utter abandonment to the magic that lies in books.

To feed this impulse, to guide it, to surround reading with an atmosphere of joy, is thus the first duty of the wise teacher. Only he who knows many books, and loves them, can be of service here. And only he who has preserved the heart of a child can guide surely. Except one become as a little child the magic word will remain unspoken. "Lessons," "recitations," the creaking machinery of school, will not avail.

But there is another and higher service. Books are not ministers of delight alone; they are means by which I bring my mind into contact with the mind of the race. We are accustomed to say that the province of school and college is to fit the soul for life. Having said this, we too often content ourselves with the faith that some studies will store the mind of the pupil with useful information, others will give him what we call mental discipline, and still others will give him a trade or a profession. But such a view is wholly mechanical. Studies become patent medicines, guaranteed to cure all ills. Emerson laid down a sounder basis, in his view that through contact with the mind of the past, with nature, and with action, the student is to find self-realization. Translated into the curriculum, these three elements become literature and history, the means of contact with the mind of the past; science, the means of contact with the world of nature; and certain studies, combined with a proper attitude towards the other two fields, that bring the pupil into contact with the world today.

It follows that the study of literature, in school and college, is more than a means for recreation or even

for culture. Literature is the record of a great tradition. It embodies, in forms of imperishable truth and beauty, what the human spirit has learned, through centuries, about life. It contributes to history, to man's relations to the world of nature, and to the world of conduct and action. It gives reality to the institutions under which we live. It is the heart of the school. It is a bible of the human spirit, dealing with things human and divine. To teach it, therefore, is to deal with the very issues of life. Names and dates, literary sources and relations, questions of metre and technique, are of no importance except as they contribute to this greater end. To teach *Macbeth*, not merely as an Elizabethan drama, but as a part of this commentary upon the meaning of life that the poets have left for us; to teach Burke's speech on Conciliation, not merely as a piece of skilful argument, but as a landmark in the progress of the Anglo-Saxon conception of an ordered freedom; to bring both these masterpieces, and others like them, into relation to the pupil's own life and the life he is to lead as a citizen, this is to realize that the study of literature ministers not only to delight and ornament, but to ability.—E. G.

THE COLYUMIST'S CORNER

[The inscriber of these despairing attempts desires to offer his humblest and sincerest apologies to Christopher Morley, Don Marquis, Luke McLuke and all the other Colyum Conductors who liven up many an editorial page.]

WE ARE REMINDED, as we launch forth down this column, of the story about some great man—of course he had to be great or there wouldn't have been any story—whose patient English teacher had succeeded in having him learn "Marco Bozzaris" for the Friday afternoon program. When the fatal, fateful hour arrived, he approached the rostrum with much fear and trembling, because all the country-side had turned out to hear the "speakin'." He started bravely enough:

"At midnight in his guarded tent
The Turk lay dreaming of the hour
When Greece her knee * * *"

but that was as far as he could get. Again and again he started afresh, but always he ended with "Greece her knee." Finally somebody in the audience called out, "Grease her again, Johnny, and mebbe she'll go."

But though we've greased and greased, we can't seem to get up much momentum; so we'll just have to crawl along like the Chapel Hill Special.

ECHOES FROM BETTER SPEECH WEEK

Have you heard this one? Try it! In pronouncing salmon, remember that it is a boy fish, not a girl fish—Sam, not Sal.

There seems to be a State-wide tendency to accent words on the first syllable, Webster to the contrary, notwithstanding: idea, event, cement, adult and a host of others are so maltreated.

Then there are the folks who say, "It was tin minutes to tin whin I wint in. You don't believe it, do you?"

If your students mumble their words, or like the Irishman, talk through their teeth, give them deep breathing exercises and let them make the open vowel sounds as they exhale. Ah, A, E, O, OO.

Enunciation is a more fundamental fault in most speakers than pronunciation. Strive to improve it. Reading sonorous poetry will help.

But for the people who say "Aaaaahhh" about every other word, there is no cure but the guillotine.

BREAD AND BUTTER ENGLISH

Do you make your pupils fully aware of the fact that aside from the artistic, the cultural side of English, there is a bread and butter value to it? Millions of people use it directly or indirectly as a means of livelihood. Even the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker have plenty of uses for it. Armour's publish books every year advertising their products, besides writing millions of letters which create good-will, get sales, collect money and do a number of other things. They spend large sums hiring correspondents trained in the art of composition.

Your own baker makes you buy his products by his cleverly worded advertisements. Only craftsmen of the first order are employed by "the bakery with a thousand windows" to write the advertisements that fairly make your mouth water.

The salesman sells because he knows how to adopt his language to his hearer, knows how to put his arguments in the most convincing manner and finally knows what to say to compel the hesitating purchaser to buy.

Bread and butter English may not produce great literature, nor write best sellers; but it does go a long way toward making life pleasanter and brighter. There is always a way of expressing a thing simply, directly, concisely, and, therefore, forcefully. That is what bread and butter English strives to do. Many, many times it fails; but the fault lies more frequently in training than in talent. And that is the point of these remarks.

Whereas the high school teacher trains one writer of great literature, he trains ten thousand users of bread and butter English. And the chances are that the one real writer would have done just as well without his